



For the Royal College of Physicians
with Dr. Jelliffe's Compt.

*A Letter to the Educational Endowments
Commissioners (Scotland).*



R51452

To the
Honourable the Educational Endow-
ments Commissioners (Scotland).

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

As one of the nearest surviving relatives of the late James Donaldson of Broughton Hall (being his nephew, nameson and godson), I consider myself entitled to address your Honourable Board with regard to the Scheme you have issued, which deals with the funds, the management, and the charitable purposes of Donaldson's Hospital.

I. I object most strongly to the intentions of the Founder being so completely set aside. By his Will, with the exception of a few small legacies and annuities, he left all his large fortune to be expended in building and endowing a Hospital for the maintenance and education of poor children after the manner of the Orphan and John Watson's Hospitals. The very name of the first Institution is enough to show for whom it was intended, while John Watson's bequest, though originally devised by him for foundlings, had been, before the time Donaldson made his will, by Act of Parliament applied to the support and training of destitute children.

Donaldson's Trustees, in order to carry out his views,—views with which they were personally well acquainted,—with the aid of that eminent architect the late W. Playfair, erected the beautiful building of which Edinburgh may justly be proud. They acted on the principle of adorning their city, while they

put up a lasting monument to the memory of a friend to the deserving poor. But while doing so they took care that all the details of the interior should be in strict accordance and harmony with the class of children to be elected; and those educational enthusiasts who so unjustly call it a palace for paupers (and I could point to some of your Board who so term it) cannot but admit that on inspecting the building the extreme plainness of the interior is painfully manifest. In 1850, when Donaldson's Hospital was opened, the various charitable institutions for children under the control of the Merchant Company were still in existence in their original shape, being truly then for the maintenance as well as education of their inmates, so the Governors thought that a wider and more efficient range might be given to the charity by the introduction of a number of deaf-mutes. This has accordingly been done, and deaf-mutes from the United Kingdom, and even outside the realm, whose parents could ill afford the costly education in their case, have enjoyed the privileges of the Institution. It may be said that the Governors should have devoted the whole building to this special class, but the teachers of deaf-mutes think it of much importance that they should consort with speaking children, and the Governors therefore, in strict accordance with the Will of the Founder, elected from the humblest deserving but destitute classes a certain number of hearing children, the great majority of whom were orphans. This has been attended with the happiest results, for it has been found to help largely the adaptation of the deaf-mute to the struggle with the world in after life, while it has in no degree injured the hearing children, but rather developed in them a care and consideration for their afflicted school-fellows, which cannot but exercise a genial influence on their moral training.

Since its foundation in 1850 the Hospital has been judiciously managed: no objection has ever been brought against the Governors that they have neglected or overstepped

their duties, or that they have erred in their selection of suitable objects for the charity ; and yet in order to work out a fanciful scheme, not of charity, mark you, which was the primary object of James Donaldson, but of education to be given to parties who must pay for it, your Honourable Board propose to bundle out all the deaf-mutes and turn them like a flock of sheep into new pastures at the Orphan Hospital, an Institution expressly devoted to the care of orphans, while the parents of their proposed new occupants, viz., the deaf and dumb, are in most cases alive. This lot being thus got rid of, no destitute children are now to be received at Donaldson's Hospital, but the building is to be appropriated, or rather confiscated, and turned into a large day-school for the secondary education of girls. If to this be added a few thousands a year taken from its funds for the establishment of bursaries for girls, and a thousand a year for the higher education of women, the complete annihilation and subversion of the original charity becomes apparent.

Allow me to point out another phase of the question.

It is only fifty-four years since the Founder died, and thirty-four since the Hospital was opened, and there are still some people alive who were acquainted with James Donaldson, and knew either directly or indirectly his benevolent intentions.¹ The present Treasurer, John Cook, W.S., is the son of the late Walter Cook, W.S., one of Mr. Donaldson's most intimate friends, and a trustee under his Will. He was in partnership with his father at the time the Hospital was built, and was therefore directly cognisant of the wishes of the Founder. Stuart Neilson, W.S., the present Clerk, was in partnership with

¹ These intentions admit of no doubt. Apart from his Will, the five Trustees named by him, viz., John Irving, W.S., James Hope, W.S., Walter Cook, W.S., William Cadell, Treasurer to the Bank of Scotland, and Alexander Monypenny, W.S., were his intimate friends, who knew these thoroughly, and they built the Hospital as a residence for boys and girls, and Messrs. Irving and Cook, the Treasurers, after it was built, embodied Mr. Donaldson's wishes in a Deed of Constitution, under which it has since been carried on.

John Irving, W.S., the most devoted friend and confidential adviser that James Donaldson had, having prepared his Will, and he also well knows the views of the Founder. Through my late father, who was Donaldson's brother-in-law, and a Governor of the Hospital till his death in 1859, I am well acquainted with the designs of my uncle. Moreover, having attended professionally the children in the Institution since it was opened (a period of thirty-four years), I am entitled to have an opinion on the subject, and I can honestly say that it is hardly possible to suggest a more appropriate charitable object, more benevolently conceived or more judiciously carried out, than this Hospital for destitute children, which is now proposed to be laid hold of for the secondary education of girls.

Besides myself there are other nephews and nieces alive, and I trust your Honourable Board and the British public will be at no loss to understand how galling it is to our feelings to be told that a Hospital of which we are justly proud, a charity which we do not grudge, so long as it is applied to fulfil the benevolent intention of our relative, is to be coolly confiscated by one of the most oppressive official appointments ever instituted by a Liberal Government.¹

That Her Gracious Majesty and Her Privy Council can ever sanction such an unwarrantable interference with the rights of property I can hardly conceive, and I hope it only requires the case to be well ventilated to procure the abandonment or destruction of the Scheme.

I may mention two additional facts. A nephew of the late James Donaldson is at present alive, about 70 years of age, who is utterly destitute, and supported by the annual contributions of relatives not well able to afford the tax on their moderate incomes.

A grand-nephew of the Founder is in a similar position. He was supporting himself abroad when a most serious and

¹ This is not political capital, as I am myself a Liberal.—J. D. G.

intractable malady laid hold on him and brought ruin on his household.

With these ungarnished facts before us, no wonder Donaldson's relatives and friends are disgusted, when they hear that funds over which they have no control, but in which they are naturally interested, are to be diverted from their original charitable purpose and given to a wealthier class.

II. Having now put before you a matter personal to myself and James Donaldson's relations, allow me in the second place to point out how much less useful the Scheme is, as regards Donaldson's Hospital at all events, leaving it to its other companions in affliction, John Watson's and the Orphan Hospitals, to deal with their own grievances.

The Scheme proposed by the Endowment Commissioners throughout its whole details shows most distinctly what I suppose I must not term the cloven foot of Sir Thomas Boyd, though the incalculable mischief about to be perpetrated might warrant the expression, but I withdraw it, and shall rather say the too busy hand, for it is simply a close imitation of the Merchant Company's Scheme for the reorganisation of the Hospitals in which they were directly interested. It is well known that it was the *master*-hand of Sir Thomas Boyd, when he was Master of the Company, which carried through the Provisional Order in 1870, that effected a complete change on the Hospitals under their control. But the Company had for so many years educated the public to recognise the Hospitals of which they were the chief responsible guardians as their own, that no great opposition was aroused against their Scheme, and the Company and the public are I presume satisfied with it now. I should think, however, that members of that powerful body will be disposed in wonder to exclaim, "Has Sir Thomas quarrelled with his old love?" for, as I will presently show, the direct effect of the new Scheme is to bring itself into antagonism with the Merchant Company's successful *coup d'état* of 1870. "Too much pudding" is a good

though a homely phrase, and may well be applied to the Endowed Schemes' eookery, which proposes to open Donaldson's Hospital for the secondary education of girls to a class for which the Merchant Company have already provided accommodation for upwards of 2200 girls, viz., 1400 in the Edinburgh Ladies' College, Queen Street, which is simply the Merchant Maiden charity manipulated, and 800 in George Watson's College for Ladies in George Square. Surely these populous and evidently popular Institutions are in all conscience enough for the requirements of Edinburgh, but the pet scheme of the Endowed Commissioners proposes to appropriate the magnificent building of Donaldson's Hospital for the same identicel purpose! Here is a rivalry with a vengeance! Donaldson's money was to maintain and educate destitute children from any part of the kingdom, or even elsewhere, giving the preference to Donaldsons and Marshalls; the Endowed Hospital Scheme, ignoring all this, ignoring the good the Hospital has already done, is about to vie with the other transformed Hospitals in providing secondary education for female *residents* in Edinburgh only, whose relatives can afford to pay for it. In short, Donaldson wished to help those poor people in all quarters of the country who have a repugnance to asking parochial relief, and yet, though really above the rank of paupers, cannot satisfactorily feed and educate their children, while the Endowed Commissioners seek to institute another college for Edinburgh ladies only, either to compete with the 2200 already enjoying the privilege of a cheap education, or to entice them from their present establishments by underselling them to the extent of a few shillings! From the wording of the clause in the Scheme, though primary education is permitted to be given in Donaldson's Hospital, it is to be entirely subsidiary to the other, and only offered to the *same class* of children. They must pay at least £2 for it, while the most the Merchant Company's pupils pay is £2, 10s. for the same amount of instruction.

"Do I sleep? do I dream?
 Do I wander and doubt?
 Are things what they seem?
 Or is visions about?
 Is our civilisation a failure?
 Or is the Caucasian played out?"

Surely the Caucasian is already played out as regards Ladies' Colleges!

We all know the site of Donaldson's Hospital. Is its locality well fitted for the class of girls to be educated at a Day School there? The districts of Roseburn, Dalry, and Coltbridge, even throwing in the village of the Water of Leith, are not likely to turn out girls whose parents are willing or able to pay for their instruction in (I quote from the Scheme) Latin, German, French, Mathematics, Drawing, Vocal Music, Instruction on the Pianoforte, at least one branch of Natural Science, Drill, Calisthenics, Needlework, Cookery, and such other subjects as the Governors may from time to time determine.

For this amount of Secondary Education the Merehant Company charge £12 a head, and are thought to do it very cheap. Will the Endowed Commissioners repeat the under-selling process, and offer the job at £11, 10s.?

Let any unbigoted party compare this programme with the good at present being quietly and unostentatiously done at Donaldson's Hospital, and I defy him to say that the Commissioners are justified in laying their covetous hands on its finances.

I have gone carefully over the admissions of children to the Institution during the last twenty years with the following results:—

In addition to those remaining in the Hospital in the year 1864, 432 Hearing Children have been elected. Out of that number no less than 387 had lost their fathers, the natural bread-winners, while 80 had lost both parents. Of the remaining 45, some had deaf-mute parents, fathers blind, or one or other parent insane. The children came from all parts of the United Kingdom, a few from distant climes.

I have selected at random four cases to show the circumstances which placed them on the Charity, and quote from the history disclosed in their petitions.

(1.) The Privileged Class.

1. William J. Donaldson, æt. 8. "Father was a smith in the Royal Artillery. Mother married again to a soldier, who was so cruel to the children that two of the girls have been got into the Sealkote Orphanage, but the boy cannot be taken in. The Rev. Mr. Ross of Poona was anxious to save the boy from a potchery (*sic*) life."

2. Agnes M. Marshall, æt. 7. Born at Dolores, Buenos Ayres. Father dead; was a sheep-farmer. Mother alive; housekeeper to her brother. Earns nothing; character good. Their house totally destroyed by fire in 1873. Most of their household goods destroyed. Marshall found dead in one of his sheep-runs in 1875. Mrs. Marshall on her way home was wrecked in the Boyne, and all she possessed was lost.

(2.) Unprivileged Class.

1. Thomas J. M. Davidson, æt. 8. Resides at Newport Street with his mother. Father dead; was a teacher of French. Mother a seamstress, earning 6s. a week.

2. Lillias H. Weston, æt. 8. Born at South Norwood, Surrey. Father alive; was a gardener, but suffering from a paralytic affection called locomotor ataxy; wholly unable to support himself. Mother dead. There are two other children, all supported by two sisters, one a dressmaker, the other a servant.

I ask fearlessly the question,—

Which was the better use to make of the Donor's money,—to assist cases similar to these, or to apply it to the Secondary Education of girls of well-to-do citizens, Bursaries to the University, and the Higher Education of Women?

During the same period of twenty years 349 deaf-mutes from all parts of the world became beneficiaries of the Charity. I give a list of the places from which they came.

*List of Places from which Deaf-Mutes were sent to Donaldson's
Hospital, between 1864 and the end of 1883.*

Alloa.	Brampton.	Halbeath.
Arran.	Crossford.	Hatton.
Ayr.	Cloverhill.	Huntly.
Airdrie.	Crieff.	Hawick.
Alva.	Cowdenbeath.	Hillclay.
Auchterarder.	Castle Hill.	Hobkirk.
Addiewell.	Clackmannan.	Inverness.
Aberdour.	Cleish.	Inverary.
Annan.	Caithness.	Jarrow.
Assynt.	Crail.	Kirkcaldy.
Auchtertoul.	Carlisle.	Kilmarnock.
Arbroath.	Cove.	Kinghorn.
Abernethy.	Carluke.	Kirkliston.
Auchingell.	Cumnock.	Kelty.
Bo'ness.	Craigend.	Kilbirnie.
Bonny Bridge.	Carberry.	Kinloch.
Beith.	Dunfermline.	Kirriemuir.
Bervie.	Dundee.	Kingscat.
Blackhall.	Dalkeith.	Kirkmahoe.
Blackbraes.	Denny.	Kinning Park.
Blackburn.	Edinburgh.	Kilconquhar.
Bankfoot.	Errol.	Kelso.
Bridge of Dun.	Edgehead.	Kinross.
Burnmouth.	East Wemyss.	Kinglassie.
Braco.	Earlston.	Larkhall.
Blackford.	East Linton.	Loch Ranza.
Beauly.	Forfar.	Leslie.
Banff.	Fochabers.	Lerwick.
Bathgate.	Falkirk.	Lundie.
Blebo.	Fearn.	Lunan.
Banknock.	Flemington.	Lochgelly.
Bainsford.	Fauldhouse.	Liberton.
Burnhaugh.	Fireburn Mill.	Linthaugb Ford.
Brechin.	Gatehouse.	Montrose.
Blairgowrie.	Galston.	Musselburgh.
Bothkennar.	Galashiels.	Maryhill.
Blantyre.	Glasgow.	Motherwell.
Birkenhead.	Gartmore.	Muiravonside.
Berwick.	Gilmerton.	Maidstone.
Bute.	Greenock.	Mordington.
Balwhylo.	Garnet Hill.	Munlochry.
Bailliceston.	Hamilton.	Nairn.
Burntisland.	Halford.	North Ronaldshay.

Perth.	Pathhead, Fife.	Shetland.
Pitsligo.	Port-an-Cross.	South Crossaig.
Portniehol.	Rothsay.	Tranent.
Perthshire.	Ross-shire.	Tain.
Port Appine.	Rosehearty.	Thornhill.
Pittenweem.	Royal Artillery.	Thurso.
Partiek.	Stornoway.	Whifflet.
Port Bannatyne.	Shieldhill.	Wishaw.
Prestonpans.	Slamannan.	Windygates.
Port Essie.	Sunderland.	Wemyss.
Portobello.	St. Andrews.	Wiek.
Prestwick.	Shotts.	West Wemyss.
Pathhead.		

Sir Alexander Grant, in his article on Endowed Hospitals, published in *Recess Studies* in 1870, thus curtly in a note gets rid of the deaf-mutes at Donaldson's Hospital :—

“The objections to this plan are, 1st, That such an Institution is hardly wanted, as the other towns of Scotland have asylums of the kind. 2d, That, were the plan adopted, Donaldson's Hospital would be deprived of the conspicuous position which it might otherwise hold in the organisation of Public Instruction.”

In answer to objection No. 1 I would merely say that the mothers of deaf-mutes have not yet reached that high standard of education as to manage to arrange their accouchements in the other towns of Scotland which have asylums of the kind. Moreover, so far as I know, there are no Deaf and Dumb Institutions in Scotland which provide maintenance and education free.

To No. 2 I reply that there never was a more cynical recommendation to do evil that good might possibly come of it. It amounts to this : “ I don't care a doit whether Donaldson's Hospital for the Deaf and Dumb is a specially urgent charity ; it is necessary for my scheme, so it must go.”

It is quite natural that the Principal of Edinburgh University, in his little sanctum at the top of his official residence, should cast his longing eyes on the various Hospitals by which

he was surrounded. Methinks I hear him saying, "Those Hospitals have big revenues, but contribute precious little to the coffers of the University; I'll have a shy at them."

The result in 1870 was what he calls "the fortuitous concurrence of atoms," and his justly celebrated paper on the Endowed Hospitals of Scotland. While quietly smoking his pipe of peace he was blowing far and wide the fumes of discord, and the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Commission is the direct result of his article.

I can imagine it a very pleasant recreation to sit in a snug study and drive a coach and four through, or make ducks and drakes of, charitable bequests. It is still more pleasant when, by doing so, a helping hand can be given to what may be called the foster child of the Principal. You have only to look at the diagram drawn by that worthy man, illustrating his scheme for the manipulation of the Hospitals, and you will see the goal to which it ultimately tends,—"*University Four years with Bursaries from all the Hospitals*"!!

The Merchant Company soon afterwards took a hint from this scheme, and thereby destroyed its integrity, but I do not think that Sir Alexander Grant can be pleased with the arrangement by the Endowed Commissioners of "the fortuitous concurrence of atoms" that remain. The establishment of Board Schools, moreover, has completely knocked on the head the elaborate scheme resulting from Sir Alexander's reeves lucubrations, but it should also have led to the abandonment of the meddlesome crotchets which propose to destroy the Hospitals which still exist for the purpose of charity.

A popular cry has been raised by advocates for the abolition of Hospitals and the application of the money to their own pet schemes, which is, I think, extremely unfair. I allude to the way in which what they call monastic institutions are condemned. According to them, everything that is bad must arise from cooping up *poor* children in these large establishments, but not a word is said about exactly similar boarding-

schools for children of the *wealthy*. What is sauce for the goose is sauce also for the gander, and yet the very people who abuse the arrangement for poor children send their own to Eton, Harrow, the Charter-house, Winchester, Marlborough College, Cargilfield, Fettes, etc. What is the difference? As regards Donaldson's Hospital, country children get much the same holidays as are given at the wealthy schools, while children who have friends in town are allowed to visit them once a month. The boys play football, cricket, etc., and are regularly drilled, while the girls have calisthenics and lawn tennis, etc.

In fact, if a comparison is to be made between Donaldson's Hospital and the others the former easily bears off the palm. During the thirty-four years of its existence it has never been shut up, nor have the children been sent home owing to the prevalence of contagious diseases within its walls. I know of no large seminary educating between two and three hundred children that can show such a result.

III. I come now to what I must treat very shortly, and I only mention it in the hope that the Governors of Donaldson's Hospital, who are legal authorities, may tackle the subject—I mean the powers which the Endowed Commissioners propose to exercise. I always understood that any changes they were empowered to make must be in consonance with the Will of the Founder. Does a scheme for giving secondary education to girls, without their maintenance, and higher education to grown-up women, come within the intention of the Founder? Does a scheme which ignores the special privileges accorded to Donaldsons and Marshalls not run counter to the expressed wish of the Founder?

I trust Donaldsons and Marshalls throughout the country will arouse themselves, ere it be too late, and insist on their rights being preserved.

In conclusion, I would ask, Why should the Endowed Com-

missioners get the credit, such as it is, of turning the Orphan Hospital into a great Institution for the maintenance and education of the Deaf and Dumb, while they achieve the lasting disgrace of having wrested the honour of such a charitable provision from the Governors of James Donaldson's Hospital?

Why should James Donaldson's name be associated with a sort of give-and-take charity to the daughters of the upper classes, who do not require it, while the inestimable benefits which his money has conferred on poor deaf and dumb children, and the relatives of orphans struggling to keep these destitute children from the poorhouse, are persistently ignored?

Oh, sacred Truth! thy triumph ceased a while,
And Hope, thy sister, ceased with thee to smile,
When leagued Oppression poured to *Northern soil*,
Commissioners Endowed the Poor to spoil!

It may be that this lust for appropriating the heritage of the poor has not yet been fully satiated; it may be that the apathy of my countrymen will permit what I cannot help characterising as a grievous wrong to be perpetrated; but at all events, by remonstrating, to the utmost of my ability, I feel that I have done my duty to the memory of my late uncle, James Donaldson of Broughton Hall.

I am,

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES DONALDSON GILLESPIE,

M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

July 31, 1884.



